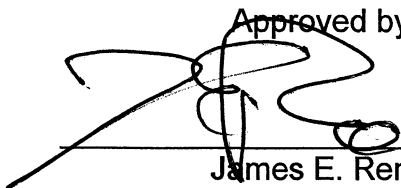


Policy & Procedures  
for the  
Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery  
Yellowstone County, Montana

Approved by



James E. Reno

Chairman,  
Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners

*October 28, 2008*  
Date

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## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1 - ADMINISTRATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners .....	5
Board of Commissioners' Responsibilities .....	5
Yellowstone County Veterans Memorial Cemetery Board.....	5
Veterans Cemetery Board Composition and Responsibilites .....	5
 <b>CHAPTER 2 - ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF INTERMENT .....</b>	 <b>7</b>
Veterans and Members of the Armed Forces .....	7
U.S. Citizen Serving in Armed Forces of an Allied Government.....	7
Reservists.....	7
National Guard .....	7
Reserve Officers' Training Corps .....	8
Service Academies.....	8
Public Health Service .....	8
World War II Merchant Mariners .....	9
Philippine Armed Forces.....	9
Spouses and Family Members .....	10
Ineligible Veterans .....	10
Establishing Veteran's Eligibility.....	10
Next-of-Kin Information Requirements .....	11
Yellowstone County Residency Requirments .....	11
 <b>CHAPTER 3 - APPLICATION PROCESS.....</b>	 <b>13</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 4 - CEMETERY OPERATIONS .....</b>	 <b>15</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 5 - COORDINATION WITH PERSONS IN CHARGE OF DISPOSTION OF REMAINS .....</b>	 <b>21</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 6 - FEES .....</b>	 <b>23</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 7 - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN .....</b>	 <b>25</b>

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Administration**

1. a. The Yellowstone County, Montana, Board of Commissioners ("Board of Commissioners") shall have sole jurisdiction and overall responsibility for the by-laws, policies, procedures, budget, and operations of the Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery ("Veterans Cemetery"). The Board of Commissioners shall ensure the Veterans Cemetery is maintained in an honorable and dignified manner to perpetually memorialize interred veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and other approved deceased persons. The Board of Commissioners shall establish the Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery Board ("Cemetery Board") as an advisory board to advise and assist the Board of Commissioners on matters with the Veterans Cemetery.

b. The Cemetery Board shall consist of 7 members and 3 Ex-Officios. The Ex-officios shall be comprised of a member of the Board of Commissioners, a member of the City of Billings, MT, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands, and a member representing the City of Laurel, MT. The Board of Commissioners shall select the other 7 Cemetery Board members through an application process. The Board of Commissioners shall determine the term of office for the Cemetery Board Members: 4 members shall have 3-year terms; 3 members shall have 2-year terms. The Board of Commissioners shall vary the length of terms of office for the Cemetery Board members to ensure the terms of office do not expire at the same time. The 7 Cemetery Board members shall serve without pay or compensation.

c. The Cemetery Board serves only as an advisory board to the Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners; the Cemetery Board has no inherent authority. The Cemetery Board shall convene from time-to-time to review the operations and needed items of business for the Veterans Cemetery. However, the Board shall convene mandatory meetings on the last Friday of April and the last Friday of September to review and coordinate any activities involving events and activities for Memorial Day and Veterans Day. A quorum shall consist of at least 4 Cemetery Board members. A simple majority vote of the quorum is needed to decide issues put to a vote during Cemetery Board meetings. The Cemetery Board shall elect a Chairman.

d. The Cemetery Board is responsible for recommending for the Board of Commissioners' approval, the by-laws, policies, procedures, budget, record keeping and day-to-day operations of the Veterans Cemetery.

e. The Cemetery Board shall prepare the Veterans Cemetery Policies and Procedures Manual, ("Manual"). The Cemetery Board will review the Manual at least annually and shall be responsible for the Manual's revisions when needed. The Board of Commissioners shall approve the Manual and any revisions. When the Board of Commissioners approves the Manual, the Cemetery Board then shall

oversee the operations and management of the Veterans Cemetery, subject to the Board of Commissioners ultimate authority over the operations.

f. The Cemetery Board shall establish management and operations goals for the Veterans Cemetery to try whenever possible and feasible, to comply with the United States Veterans Administration standards for national veterans cemeteries.

g. The Cemetery Board shall prepare and present to the Board of Commissioners, any reports needed on the state of business with the Veterans Cemetery.

h. Any Yellowstone County officials, designated by the Board of Commissioners with management and oversight of the Veterans Cemetery, shall comply with the policies and procedures in this manual.

i. Should questions arise as to the intent or interpretations of this Manual, the inquiry shall first be directed to the Chairman, Veterans Cemetery Board.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Eligibility Requirements for Burial**

1. a. For interment in the Veterans Cemetery, the Cemetery follows the national Veterans Administration policy for eligibility. If a conflict exists between the Veterans Cemetery burial eligibility criteria and the Veterans Administration burial eligibility criteria, the Veterans Administration eligibility criteria will be the deciding factor.

b. Burial in the Veterans Cemetery is open to all members of the armed forces and veterans who have met minimum active service duty requirements, were not convicted of a capital crime, and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, or otherwise barred from receiving veterans benefits. The spouse, widow, or widower, minor children and under certain conditions unmarried adult children may also be eligible for burials. Eligible spouses and children may be buried, even if they predecease the veteran. Members of the reserve components of the armed forces, who die while on active duty or while performing training duty or were eligible or retired pay, may also be eligible for burial.

c. The veteran or eligible family member does not have to be a resident of Yellowstone County, MT to be eligible for burial in the Veterans Cemetery.

2. Specifics for eligibility for burial are:

a. Veterans and Members of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard).

b. Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who dies on active duty.

c. With certain exceptions, service beginning after September 7, 1980, as an enlisted person, and service after October 16, 1981 as an officer, must be for a minimum of 24 continuous months or the full period for which the person was called to active duty (as in the case of a Reservist called to active duty for a limited duration).

d. Any citizen of the United States who, during any war in which the United States has or may be engaged, served in the Armed Forces of any Government allied with the United States during that war, whose last active service was terminated honorably by death or otherwise, and who was a citizen of the United States at the time of entry into such service and at the time of death.

e. Reservists and National Guard members who, at time of death, were entitled to retired pay under Chapter 1223, title 10, United States Code, or would have been entitled, but for being under the age of 60. Specific categories of

individuals eligible for retired pay are delineated in section 12731 of Chapter 1223, title 10, United States Code.

f. Members of reserve components, and members of the Army National Guard or the Air National Guard, who die while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the United States for injury or disease contracted or incurred under honorable conditions while performing active duty for training or inactive duty training, or undergoing such hospitalization or treatment.

g. Members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps or service academies of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, and Coast Guard who die under honorable conditions while attending an authorized training camp or on an authorized cruise, while performing authorized travel to or from that camp or cruise, or while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the United States for injury or disease contracted or incurred under honorable conditions while engaged in one of those activities.

h. Members of reserve components who, during a period of active duty for training, were disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or, during a period of inactive duty training, were disabled or died from an injury or certain cardiovascular disorders incurred or aggravated in line of duty.

i. Commissioned Officers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

(1). A Commissioned Officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (formerly titled the Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Environmental Science Services Administration) with full-time duty on or after July 29, 1945.

(2). A Commissioned Officer who served before July 29, 1945; and,

(a) Was assigned to an area of immediate military hazard as determined by the Secretary of Defense while in time of war, or in a Presidential declared national emergency; or,

(b) Served in the Philippine Islands on December 7, 1941, and continuously in such islands thereafter.

j. Public Health Service

(1). A Commissioned Officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service who served on full-time duty on or after July 29, 1945. If the service of the particular Public Health Service Officer falls within the meaning of active duty for training, as defined in section 101(22), title 38, United States Code,



he or she must have been disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

(2). A Commissioned Officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service who performed full-time duty prior to July 29, 1945:

(a). In time of war;

(b). On detail for duty with the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard; or,

(c). While the Service was part of the military forces of the United States pursuant to Executive Order of the President.

(3). A Commissioned Officer serving on inactive duty training as defined in section 101(23), title 38, United States Code, whose death resulted from an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

k. World War II Merchant Mariners

(1). United States Merchant Mariners with oceangoing service during the period of armed conflict, December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946. Prior to the enactment of Public Law 105-368, United States Merchant Mariners with oceangoing service during the period of armed conflict of December 7, 1941, to August 15, 1945, were eligible. With enactment of Public Law 105-368, the service period is extended to December 31, 1946, for those dying on or after November 11, 1998. A DD-214 documenting this service may be obtained by submitting an application to Commandant (G-MVP-6), United States Coast Guard, 2100 2nd Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593. Notwithstanding, the Mariner's death must have occurred on or after the enactment of Public Law 105-368.

(2). United States Merchant Mariners who served on blockships in support of Operation Mulberry during World War II.

l. The Philippine Armed Forces.

(1). Any Philippine veteran who was a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States at the time of their death; and resided in the United States at the time of their death; and,

(a). Was a person who served before July 1, 1946, in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, while such forces were in the service of the Armed Forces of the United States pursuant to the military order of the President dated July 26, 1941, including organized guerilla forces under commanders appointed, designated, or subsequently recognized by the Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, or

other competent authority in the Army of the United States, and who died on or after November 1, 2000; or,

(b). Was a person who enlisted between October 6, 1945, and June 30, 1947, with the Armed Forces of the United States with the consent of the Philippine government, pursuant to section 14 of the Armed Forces Voluntary Recruitment Act of 1945, and who died on or after December 16, 2003.

g. Spouses and Family Members

(1). The spouse or surviving spouse of an eligible veteran is eligible for interment in a national cemetery even if that veteran is not buried or memorialized in a national cemetery. The spouse or surviving spouse of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States whose remains are unavailable for burial is also eligible for burial.

(2). The surviving spouse of an eligible veteran who had a subsequent remarriage to a non-veteran and whose death occurred on or after January 1, 2000, is eligible for burial in a national cemetery, based on his or her marriage to the eligible veteran.

(3). The minor children of an eligible veteran. For purpose of burial in a national cemetery, a minor child is a child who is unmarried and:

(a). Who is under 21 years of age; or,

(b). Who is under 23 years of age and pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved educational institution.

(4). The unmarried adult child of an eligible veteran. For purpose of burial in a national cemetery, an unmarried adult child is of any age but became permanently physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self-support before reaching 21 years of age, or before reaching 23 years of age if pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved educational institution. The next-of-kin shall provide proper supporting documentation.

3. Ineligible Veterans. Veterans having a dishonorable discharge are not eligible for burial in the Veterans Cemetery. Veterans convicted of a capital crime are not eligible for burial in the Veterans Cemetery regardless of the type of the veteran's military or service discharge. Any veteran whose character of service results in a bar to veterans benefits is not eligible for burial in the Veterans Cemetery.

4. To establish the veteran's eligibility for burial in the Veterans Cemetery, a copy of the official military discharge document bearing an official seal or a Department of Defense form DD-214 is usually sufficient to determine eligibility for

burial in the Veterans Cemetery. The document must show that release from service was not a Dishonorable discharge. For most veterans, a Department of Defense form DD-214 or other discharge document will be required to determine eligibility for burial. Documentation such as a "20 year letter" covering release from reserve components or the National Guard may also qualify individuals for burial.

5. The veteran's next-of-kin shall also provide:

- a. veteran's name
- b. military rank (if known)
- c. serial number, social security, or VA claim numbers
- d. branch of service
- e. date and place of entry into and separation from the service
- f. date and place of birth; and date of death.

6. If discharge documentation is not available, the next-of-kin can request a copy from the National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records Office, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, MO., 63132-5100. If no records exist, the next-of-kin shall furnish as much information as possible to the Veterans Cemetery to determine the veteran's eligibility for interment. If any questions exist as to the interment eligibility of the deceased, the Board of Commissioners or its designee will make the final determination of eligibility for burial.

7. Yellowstone County residency requirements shall be considered met under the following criteria:

- a. The veteran was a resident of Yellowstone County at the time of entering the service; or.
- b. The veteran settled in Yellowstone County subsequent to active duty and lived in the County for at least two years immediately preceding the time of death, or preceding the time of the veteran entering into a Veteran's home or an assisted living facility, hospice care facility, nursing home facility or any such other facility.

8. Satisfactory proof of Yellowstone County residency shall be provided to the Chairman, Veterans Cemetery Board, or designee, by the veteran, next of kin, or funeral director arranging interment and shall be established by any of the following credentials:

- a. A Montana driver's license listing a Yellowstone County address.

b. A Montana voter registration card listing a Yellowstone County polling place.

c. A paid Yellowstone County residential real estate tax bill.

d. Utility bills with the veteran's name and Yellowstone County address.

e. Other appropriate documentation showing that the veteran was a resident of Yellowstone County.

9. Spouse and dependent unmarried children under/the age of 18 are eligible for interment.

10. Adult children who are unmarried but are permanently incapable of self-support because of a physical or mental disability incurred before attaining the age of 18 are eligible.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Application Process**

1. The Cemetery Board shall create and provide an application packet for interment in the Veterans Cemetery. The City of Laurel, Montana, Public Works Department, shall receive, review, and process all application packets for burial. Application forms are available from the City of Laurel Public Works Department, Laurel City Hall, 115 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Laurel, MT 59044, veterans groups, or funeral directors.
2. Veterans may pre-file applications for interment with the City of Laurel by providing the necessary documentation to establish eligibility. Veterans who pre-file should make their immediate family members aware that they intend to be buried in the Yellowstone County Veterans Memorial Cemetery.
3. Veterans cannot reserve or pre-select a burial plot or columbarium niche with one exception: when both spouses are veterans, two gravesites and two headstones may be provided if requested. The surviving spouse can reserve the plot next to the deceased veteran, as the surviving spouse is eligible for veterans benefits independent of the deceased spouse.

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## **Chapter 4**

### **Cemetery Operations**

1. a. The Board of Commissioners has designated the Veterans Cemetery as a perpetual place of honored respect, dignity, and sacredness for the military veterans interred there. The cemetery grounds are primarily for interment and bereavement purposes. The Veterans Cemetery operations, policies, and activities shall be conducted in a disciplined fashion in accordance with the high standards of the military services of the United States, as represented by the men and women who served in uniform and who are interred in this honored resting place.

b. The City of Laurel is responsible for the day-to-day operations and management of the Veterans Cemetery.

#### **2. Rules of Conduct.**

a. The tranquil and pristine setting of the Veterans Cemetery is not to be taken as a place of recreation. The use of the cemetery grounds for recreational or leisurely purposes, however inoffensive and seemingly harmless, is not permitted, examples: jogging, bicycling, recreational walking for exercise only, pet walking, skateboarding, snow recreation activities, and picnicking. The Board of Commissioners or its designee is committed to enforcing this.

b. The Board of Commissioners or its designee shall establish visiting hours for the Veterans Cemetery for convenience of the public. The Veterans Cemetery shall be closed to the public during the hours so established. The Board of Commissioners shall have the authority to close certain areas of the Veterans Cemetery to public access. The Board of Commissioners shall limit admission to the Veterans Cemetery during hours closed to the public for only those people the Board of Commissioners' or designee so authorize.

c. The improper disposal of rubbish on the property, spitting on the property, the creation of any hazard on the property to persons or objects, the throwing of article of any kind, the climbing on fences, gates, and structures, the defacement or destruction of objects and gravestones is prohibited.

d. The use of alcohol, narcotics, and illegal drugs, boisterous, demeaning activity, improper conduct including sexual conduct, on the cemetery grounds is expressly forbidden.

e. The Board of Commissioners or its designee shall have the authority to post signs of a prohibitory or directive nature. All persons within the Veterans Cemetery shall comply with signage.

g. Soliciting alms and contributions, commercial soliciting, and vending of any kind, displaying or distributing commercial advertising or collection of private debts in or on the property is prohibited.

h. The distributing of materials such as pamphlets, handbills, or flyers, and the displaying of placards or posting of materials on bulletin boards or elsewhere on the property is prohibited except as authorized by the Board of Commissioners or its designee.

i. Photography for news, advertising, or commercial purposes may be taken only with the written consent of the Board of Commissioners or its designee.

j. The only animals permitted in the Veterans Cemetery are service dogs: such as seeing-eye dogs.

k. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic shall comply with all signage and directional indicators on the property. The blocking of entrances, driveways, walks and fire hydrants is prohibited. Creating excessive noise by modified vehicular mufflers or horns is prohibited. Speeding is prohibited.

l. No person while on the property shall carry firearms or other dangerous or deadly weapons either openly or concealed except for official purposes.

m. Any service, ceremony, or demonstration except as authorized by the Board of Commissioners or its designee is prohibited. The scheduling of public ceremonies, other than burials, shall be coordinated with the Board of Commissioners or its designee. The use of the cemetery grounds for public gatherings of a partisan nature is expressly forbidden.

4. Interment in the Veterans Cemetery shall be in plots or niches in sequential order by plot or niche number. Burial plots and columbarium niches cannot be reserved in advance, with one exception: if both husband and wife are eligible veterans, the surviving spouse can reserve an adjacent plot next to the interred spouse, as both are independently eligible for veterans' benefits. Family members or next-of-kin cannot select specific plots or niches at the time of interment.

#### 5. Burial plots

a. Burial plots in the Veterans Cemetery shall be 10 feet long by 5 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

b. Two (2) adult-sized caskets along with 2 cremains are the maximum allowable in any one burial plot.

c. The 2 adult-sized caskets shall be stacked in one burial plot.



d. Burial of cremains shall be in a full-sized burial plot. Cremains shall not be scattered on the Veterans Cemetery grounds.

e. No plot or columbarium niche shall be reduced in dimension to accommodate only a headstone to mark a grave where remains were not interred; example: cremains scattered elsewhere but the next-of-kin applied for a headstone; or a marker to memorialize a veteran who is listed as missing-in-action and whose remains were never recovered.

6. a. Every grave or columbarium niche shall have a marker.

b. If interment is by casket, the casket shall be in an outer burial container or an appropriate vault. The City of Laurel is not responsible for procuring the vault or outer container.

c. If interment is of cremains, the cremains can be buried in any container the family provides. Yellowstone County can also provide a receptacle for cremains and a box for the receptacle. Yellowstone County will retrieve the box prior to burial. In-ground burial of cremains in designated plots is authorized throughout the Cemetery and not just in a specific section. The City of Laurel will ensure the location of in-ground burial of cremated remains within a plot remains consistent throughout the Veterans Cemetery for ease of location at any future date.

7. a. All upright markers in the Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery shall be the approved Veterans Administration upright granite markers, (block 11. v. on the VA form 40-1330) for interment of bodies and interment of in ground cremains or approved niche covers for inurnment in the columbarium wall. The markers shall be as prescribed and provided by the Department of Memorial Affairs, United States Department of Veterans Affairs. These shall be the only markers and niche covers permitted in the cemetery.

b. Since the Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery is not yet a state veterans cemetery which has received federal monies, or a nationally administered cemetery, the Veterans Administration will not provide free-of-charge, a headstone or marker to immediately mark the grave of a non-veteran spouse or eligible minor child if the non-veteran spouse or child predeceases the veteran. The Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery will require the next-of-kin to privately purchase and engrave a Veterans Administration specifications granite headstone or niche marker. The stone and niche marker are available for private purchase from the firm having the Veterans Administration contract for headstones/markers.

c. All requests for headstones or markers shall be prepared on the Veterans Administration form 40-1330 and submitted to the City of Laurel, MT Public Works Department. The City of Laurel, MT, Public Works Department shall be the single point-of-contact to receive and process all prepared Veterans Administration headstone/marker applications.

d. The City of Laurel will be responsible for installing the headstones and niche plaques. The City of Laurel will install the headstone or plaque no-later-than 14 days after receipt of the headstone or plaque. The City of Laurel is encouraged to accumulate as many headstones or plaques as reasonable, and then set a time to install several headstones and plaques in one outing. The City of Laurel is encouraged to coordinate the installation date with local veterans or civic groups to allow for volunteer support.

8. Yellowstone County shall provide to designee from the Veterans Cemetery the means to be contacted during business hours and the weekends, e.g. pager, cell phone, etc.

9. The City of Laurel shall establish visitation hours for the Veterans Cemetery. A representative from the Board of Commissioners or its designee, shall be available to Funeral Directors, or persons in charge of disposition of remains, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.: except for county, state, or federal holidays. When it is necessary for a Funeral Director, or persons in charge of disposition of remains, to contact the Board of Commissioners or its designee during evenings, weekends or holidays, the Funeral Director, or person in charge of disposition of remains, should contact the Yellowstone County Communications Center so that the Cemetery Board or designee may be contacted.

10. The City of Laurel Public Works Department will schedule burials.

a. Because of resource constraints, the City of Laurel will schedule only two interments per day: Monday through Friday, one in the morning within the time period 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and one in the afternoon within the time period of 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

b. Formal funeral services will not be held at the Veterans Cemetery. The Veterans Cemetery is for the final committal ceremony only. The Veterans Cemetery will allocate only 30 minutes to the families or funeral directors within those morning or afternoon time frames for the final committal service at the cemetery. Burial will take place following the committal service. Immediate family members may be allowed to view the actual burial only if arrangements have been made in advance with City of Laurel. Floral arrangements may accompany the casket or urn and will be placed on the grave after burial.

c. The City of Laurel will not schedule interments on weekends or federal holidays except in instances where religious tenets require interment within 24 hours.

d. Federal holidays are:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veterans Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

11. The City of Laurel will be responsible for opening and closing the grave.

12. Every interment of a veteran shall have an Honor Guard, if requested, and a flag, whether the commitment service is on-site or off-site.

13. Floral policy. The rule of thumb is: "If it is not a flower, don't leave it."

a. Flowers

(1). The gravesite will have installed a single flower container for floral arrangements. The cost of the floral containers shall be paid by the family and/or the estate of the deceased.

(2). Fresh cut flowers are allowed at any time for placement on gravesites in the on-site provided floral container. Cemetery personnel will remove live flowers from gravesites when the flowers become unsightly. Only fresh cut flowers, artificial flowers and plants which can be inserted into the on-site floral containers, shall be allowed.

(3). Artificial flowers are allowed when mowing and trimming are not being performed due to seasonal changes, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in October and must be removed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in April. A clean sweep of all artificial flowers will be performed in early April. All remaining artificial flowers will be disposed of then.

b. No plantings of any type are permitted on cemetery grounds or on grave sites, other than those included in the landscape design of the cemetery. No potted plants, wreaths, flags, emblems, or other forms of decorative articles are permitted on grave sites, unless specifically authorized during defined holidays.

d. Grave blankets of any size are not permitted.

e. Christmas decorations and wreaths (18" in diameter or smaller) shall be permitted on graves beginning December 15 and shall be removed by cemetery personnel no earlier than January 15.

f. Wreaths and/or floral arrangements are permitted during other specified holidays and shall be removed by cemetery personnel one week after the holiday. These holidays are defined as: Easter, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day.

g. Wreaths, and/or floral arrangements are permitted on the anniversary date of the Veterans death.

h. Flags shall be placed on each grave by cemetery personnel and Veterans organizations only for the Memorial Day observance and will be removed at the end of the week. Any flag found on a grave other than the Memorial Day observance will be removed.

i. Unacceptable items are: statues, vigil lights, permanent plantings, any glass object, commemorative items, memorabilia, pinwheels, balloons, any political affiliated items or signs, shepherd hooks and any grave decoration taller than the headstone. The Veterans Cemetery does not permit adornments which are considered offensive, inconsistent with the dignity of the cemetery or considered hazardous to cemetery personnel, example, beads and wires which may become entangled in mowers or other equipment and cause injuries.

j. The Veterans Cemetery strongly recommends a family mark anything the family leaves on the gravesite with the section, row, and grave number. This allows Veterans Cemetery personnel to place authorized items back on the appropriate grave if the wind/weather conditions or wildlife relocates your item.

k. Attaching anything to the granite headstone is deemed defacement and vandalism.

14. The cutting or breaking of, or injury to, the trees, shrubs, grass or other plantings on the cemetery grounds is not permitted.

15. The Board of Commissioners or its designee shall post an accurate map of the cemetery grounds marking the location of each Section, Row and Plot.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Coordination with Persons in Charge of Disposition of Remains**

1. The Funeral Director or person in charge of disposition of remains ("person in charge") shall provide the City of Laurel, the necessary documentation to verify eligibility of the deceased for burial in the Veterans Cemetery.
2. The person in charge of Disposition of Remains shall:
  - a. Coordinate the date and time of interment with the City of Laurel to ensure orderly daily management of the Veterans Cemetery.
  - b. Make the necessary arrangements for grave opening and closing.
  - c. Comply with all applicable State Cemetery regulations and all Yellowstone County regulations regarding interments and inurnments.
  - d. Shall ensure cremains are placed in an appropriate container: that is, an urn which provides weatherproof qualities, prior to burial.
  - e. Shall notify the City of Laurel of the intent of other eligible family members to be interred in the Veterans Cemetery and for whom a registration form is supplied and appropriately completed.
  - f. Shall have the responsibility to arrange for and coordinate all services at the cemetery, to include arrangements for clergy, Honor Guards, presentation of the Flag of the United States of America, and supervision of the funeral cortege.

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## **Chapter 6**

### **Fees**

1. The Veterans Cemetery shall provide the plot or columbarium niche for the veteran and eligible family members free-of-charge, and shall provide perpetual care at the cemetery, also free of charge. The Veterans Administration will provide – at no cost to the veteran’s family – a headstone or marker, Presidential Memorial Certificate, and U.S. flag.
2. The fees for the Veterans Cemetery as of 1 November 2008 are:
  - a. \$550.00 for in-ground casket burial, this includes opening and closing of the grave.
  - b. \$495.00 for inurnment in the columbarium, or for in-ground burial of cremated remains.
  - c. \$200.00 surcharge for non-Yellowstone County residents.
3. Fees for services provided by funeral directors and other related costs must be paid for by the veteran’s family.
4. If the family chooses to pay the fees directly to the City of Laurel, the City of Laurel will accept checks, money orders and credit cards.
5. Since the Veterans Cemetery is not yet a state veterans cemetery which has received federal monies, or a nationally administered cemetery, the Veterans Administration will not provide free-of-charge, a headstone or marker to immediately mark the grave of a non-veteran spouse or eligible minor child if the non-veteran spouse or child predeceases the veteran. The Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery will require the next-of-kin to privately purchase and engrave a Veterans Administration specifications granite headstone or niche marker. The stone and niche marker are available for private purchase from the firm having the Veterans Administration contract for headstones/markers. Contact the City of Laurel Public Works Department for details on private purchase of a headstone or niche marker.
6. The Veterans Administration provides a United States flag to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces. The next-of-kin can apply for the flag by completing the VA Form 21-2008, Applications for the United States Flag for Burial Purposes. You may also get a flag at any VA regional office or the U.S. Post Office.

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## **Chapter 7**

### **Information Technology Plan**

1. The Board of Commissioners or its designee shall ensure the Veterans Cemetery implements an Information Technology plan with an automated system to help the operations and management of the Veterans Cemetery. The Yellowstone County, MT, Information Services Department will assist in designing and implementing the Veterans Cemetery Information Technology Plan.
2. The Information Technology plan will try, whenever possible, to be technically compatible with the internet-based Veterans Administration national burial locator system and any Yellowstone County cemetery management system.
3. The plan shall have as a minimum:
  - a. Use technology compatible with the existing Yellowstone County information services.
  - b. A publicly accessible Internet web site for information about the Veterans Cemetery that is user friendly, esthetically inviting, easy to navigate, and with a minimum number of submenus.
  - c. An automated system to continually record, track, and report the interments at the Veterans Cemetery: including location of the burial plot or columbarium niche, and information on the deceased.
  - d. The ability to query the database for any needed reports for the Board of Commissioners.
  - e. Technical and hardware support and needed training for the City of Laurel Public Works Department who will schedule burials and maintain records for the Veterans Cemetery.
4. On a quarterly basis, the Cemetery Board shall prepare a printed copy of the Veterans Cemetery database showing who is interred in the Veterans Cemetery and the location of the plot or columbarium niche.
5. The Yellowstone County Information Services Department shall ensure a systematic electronic back-up of data is done on a regular basis.

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## Index

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A</b></p> <p>Application for Interment ..... 13</p> <p>    Application Form..... 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>B</b></p> <p>Board of Commissioners ..... 1, 5, 6</p> <p>Burial Plots ..... 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>C</b></p> <p>Cemetery Board ..... 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 20, 21</p> <p>    Compensation ..... 5</p> <p>    Composition ..... 5</p> <p>    Term of Office..... 5</p> <p>Cemetery Policy</p> <p>    Burial by Casket ..... 17</p> <p>    Cremated Remains..... 17</p> <p>    Open Hours ..... 18</p> <p>    Permanent Plants ..... 19</p> <p>    Plot Map ..... 20</p> <p>    Rules of Conduct..... 15</p> <p>Columbarium Niches ..... 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p> <p>Department of Defense form DD-214..... 11</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p>Eligibility for Burial</p> <p>    Ineligible Veterans..... 11</p> <p>    Merchant Marines..... 9</p> <p>    National Guard ..... 8</p> <p>    Phillipine Armed Forces..... 9</p> <p>    Public Health Service ..... 9</p> <p>    Reserve Officers' Training Corps ..... 8</p> <p>    Reservists ..... 8</p> <p>    Service Acadmies ..... 8</p> <p>    Spouses and Family Members ..... 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>F</b></p> <p>Federal holidays..... 19</p> <p>Flags</p> <p>    Burial flag..... 23</p> <p>    Flag Policy..... 20</p> <p>Flower Policy..... 19</p>	<p>Funeral Directors ..... 21</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>G</b></p> <p>Grave Markers ..... 17, 18</p> <p>    Application for Headstone or Marker ..... 18</p> <p>    Columbarium Niche..... 13, 17, 26</p> <p>    Private Purchase ..... 17, 23</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I</b></p> <p>Ineligible Veterans</p> <p>    Convicted of Capital Crime ..... 11</p> <p>    Dishonorable Discharge..... 11</p> <p>Information Technology Plan ..... 26</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>M</b></p> <p>Manual ..... 6</p> <p>    Cemetery Policy ..... 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>P</b></p> <p>Pet Policy ..... 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>V</b></p> <p>Veterans Administration National Burial Locator</p> <p>    System ..... 26</p> <p>Veterans Cemetery</p> <p>    Reports..... 26</p> <p>Veterans Cemetery Policies and Procedures Manual. <i>See</i></p> <p>    Manual</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>W</b></p> <p>Wreath Policy ..... 20</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></p> <p>Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners <i>See</i> Board</p> <p>    of Commissioners</p> <p>Yellowstone County Residency Requirements ..... 11</p> <p>Yellowstone County Veterans Memorial Cemetery... <i>See</i></p> <p>    Veterans Cemetery</p> <p>Yellowstone County Veterans Memorial Cemetery</p> <p>    Board ..... <i>See</i> Cemetery Board</p>
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